



RELEVANCE OF YOGA PHILOSOPHY AT PRESENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PATANJALI'S YOGA SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

The relevance of Yoga is non-negotiable element in our life considering the present human condition. Development in all spheres reached at peak of its point but human beings are unhappy with the outward development. They seek something else which can give solace to their mind. In this regard yoga can give us that solace which human being are longing for. In my paper, I shall deal with relevance of Yoga philosophy considering Patanjali the founder of Yoga system.

KEYWORDS: Yoga, Samkhya, Prakriti, Purusa

INTRODUCTION

Today everyone knows the term 'Yoga' and what it signifies in human life. But it has a long history. The 'Yoga' came to us through a philosophical system named as Patanjali's Yoga System. Though ordinarily 'yoga' means some bodily exercises connected with mind which help us to be healthy in body and mind. But for Yoga philosophy, 'yoga' means more than physical and mental health. Yoga assumes that healthy body and mind help us to attain liberation from earthly bondage. In my paper, I shall highlight on philosophical aspects of 'Yoga' with special reference to Yoga Philosophy which is empirically useful to deal with human suffering.

Etymologically, the term yoga derives from the root yug, "to bind together," "hold fast," "yoke." The word yoga serves, in general, to designate any ascetic technique and any method of meditation. There is a "classic" Yoga, a darsana, a "system of philosophy" expounded by Patanjali in his celebrated book Yoga-Sutra. Yoga philosophy accepts Samkhya metaphysical assumption of twenty-five principles except the existence of God. The practice of yoga is a sure means of attaining discriminative knowledge between self and constituents of prakriti which is a necessary condition for liberation. The significance of yoga as an important method of realizing the spiritual truths of Indian philosophy is recognized by almost all Indian schools. According to them, as long as our mind is impure and unsettled, we can not understand our true nature that is spiritual. We must have pure heart and tranquil mind if we are to know the true and correct knowledge of ourselves.

According to Yoga, liberation is to be attained through the direct knowledge of the self's distinction from the physical world (constituents of prakriti) including our body, mind and the ego. This can be possible only when we can manage to suppress and control the function of body and the senses, the manas and the intellect and finally the ego thus realizes the consciousness of pure purusa. In this regard, it is to be mentioned here that prakriti constitutes of three gunas- satva, rajas and tamas. The Yoga system lays down practical path of self-realization for the sincere seeker after truth that is discriminative knowledge between self and constituents of prakriti. Yoga means cessation of mental function or modifications (chittavrittinirodha). The aim of yoga here is to prevent the self from identifying itself with mental modifications. Citta or mind is the sum total of

buddhi, ahamkara and manas.

There are five levels of mental life depends on the elements of satva, rajas & tamas. Different condition of mind is determined by the different degrees of these gunas. These levels of mind are called:

- i. Ksipta or restless is dominated by rajas & tamas. Here citta is attracted by objects of sense & the means of attaining power. It flits from one thing to another.
- ii. Mudha: In mudha, there is access of tamas & here, citta's tendency is to go towards vice, ignorance, sleep & the like.
- iii. Viksipta or distracted: Here the citta is free from the sway of tamas & has only a touch of rajas. It has the capacity of manifestation of all objects & makes for virtue & knowledge. This is temporary concentration.
- iv. Ekagra or concentrated: It is the perfect manifestation of satva & the beginning of prolonged concentration but here mind is meditating on some object.
- v. Niudha or restrained: Here is the cessation of all mental function & process is checked & mind remains in its original, unmodified state of calmness and tranquility.

Modification of Chitta includes Pramana (right Cognition), Viparyaya (wrong cognition), Vikalpa (Verbal Cognition or imagination), Nidra (Absence of cognition or smriti), Smriti (memory).

In Yoga philosophy, Suffering is of five types- Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (egoism), Raga (attachment), Dvesa (aversion) and Abhinivesha (clinging to life & instinctive fear of death). For the purification & enlightenment of mind or citta, the yoga gives us the eightfold means of yoga:

- i. **Yama:** It is abstention from injury through thought, word or deed, from falsehood, from stealing, from lust & from non-possession
- ii. **Niyama:** It is the cultivation of good habits like internal purification, contentment, austerity, study & devotion to God.
- iii. **Asana:** It means steady & comfortable posture.
- iv. **Pranayama:** It means control of breath & deals with regulation of inhalation, retention & exhalation of breath. It induces the steadiness of mind & body.

- v. **Pratyahara:** It is control of the senses & consists in withdrawing the senses from their objects.
- vi. **Dharana:** It is fixing the objects on the object of meditation.
- vii. **Dhyana:** It means meditation & consists in the undisturbed flow of thought round the object of meditation. It is the steadfast contemplation object without any break.
- viii. **Samadhi:** Here the mind is completely absorbed in the object of meditation. Here, mind has no awareness of itself.

CONCLUSION

In practical life even if we do not accept the metaphysical assumption of yoga philosophy, the methods shown in yoga philosophy are very much helpful for mental stress and calmness of mind. Freedom from all sorts suffering is practically impossible. But we can control our mind and body using the methods as suggested by Yoga philosophy. Controlling mind and body can relieve us from different sorts of practical pain in our life. The pain that is arose out of our attachment to physical objects or objects that external to our self. Objects external to our can be my wife, son, brother, mother, father or any lovable objects. Of course, we can not use all the methods unless we have a belief in some philosophy or in some spiritual truth that spiritual truth is the belief in the highest self or God.

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